



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
*Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary*  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
*Dr. Karen Salmon, Superintendent*

## **K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program Frequently Asked Questions from Parents**

### **1. What Is the Maryland K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program?**

The **Maryland K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program** provides diagnostic tests, tools, and information to test students and staff to public and non-public schools across Maryland who choose to participate.

The state supply schools with rapid point-of-care (POC) tests to quickly screen any student or staff with symptoms of COVID-19, or who have had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. The state is utilizing a commercial lab to provide PCR diagnostic supplies to administer confirmatory tests for some students and staff based on their POC test results. Specimens collected at the school will be sent directly to the laboratory for processing with a result provided within 1-3 days.

This program supports safe, in-person learning in Maryland which protects the health of students and staff while also providing the best educational experience for all students.

### **2. Which schools are eligible to participate?**

This is a voluntary program open to all K-12 public school systems, and non-public schools in Maryland who are conducting in-person instruction or are reopening in March for in-person instruction. To find out if your child's school is participating, please contact your school administrator.

If a school has not yet opened for in-person learning, or does not have a testing program on-site yet, this program can stand alone as the school's diagnostic testing regimen. If the school already has a testing regimen in place, this program could enhance existing testing efforts.

### **3. Are all students getting tested?**

This program is a diagnostic COVID-19 testing program, targeted for students and staff who are symptomatic or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This program is not a screening program, which provides tests to every student.

The program is designed to supply enough tests to screen 100% of symptomatic students and staff, and all of those who have had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

### **4. What kind of test will students and staff receive? Can they choose what kind of test to get?**

The program provides both rapid POC tests and PCR testing supplies to schools, but the rapid POC test will be the test which is given to students and staff first, with a follow-up PCR specimen collected and sent to a lab only in some cases. Appropriately training personnel in the school will determine which is administered, based on documented clinical protocols.

#### **5. What happens if someone tests positive for COVID-19?**

Each student or staff member will receive a rapid POC test if they have COVID-19 symptoms, or have been in close contact with someone who has tested COVID-19.

Depending on their symptoms and the result of the rapid POC test, the student and staff will be sent home to isolate or quarantine, and may receive a follow-up PCR test. The school nurse or trained staff administering the test will discuss the results and the next steps.

#### **6. Can staff or students request a test?**

This program is intended to be used to diagnose potential cases of COVID-19 and isolate those students and staff based on symptoms and known exposure. It is not a screening program, although your school may have such an existing program in place. For community testing locations near you, please visit [covidtest.maryland.org](https://covidtest.maryland.org).

#### **7. How will parents be notified of test results, both positive and negative?**

The schools will notify parents of all testing activities through the usual channels of communication with parents. The lab process PCR tests will provide a result via email, or phone, based on the information provided with the sample sent to the lab.

#### **8. How long will this program last?**

The K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program will begin in March 2021 and continue through the end of the 2020-2021 school year in June.

#### **Additional MDH COVID-19 and School Resources:**

MDH CovidLINK Testing Information: <https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/testing/>

MDH main COVID-19 clinical dashboards, updated daily: [coronavirus.maryland.gov](https://coronavirus.maryland.gov)

Daily Updates on Schools COVID-19 Data: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/school-resources>

MDH COVID-19 Guidance for Schools: [MDH COVID-19 Guidance for Maryland Schools](#)